

YORK COUNTY BRIDGE NO. 101
Blymire Hollow Road (T-578) spanning
Blymire Creek, 100 feet from State Route 2095
Winterstown vicinity
York County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-275

HAER
PA
67- WINT. V.
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
Northeast Region
U. S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

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Location: Blymire Hollow Road (T-578) spanning Blymire Creek, 100 feet from State Route 2095, Winterstown vicinity, York County, Pennsylvania

UTM: 18.360470.4408450

Quad: Glen Rock, PA, 1:24,000

Date of Construction: 1915

Engineer: Charles A. Williams

Contractor: Harry and Charles Ness

Present Owner: County of York
One West Marketway, Fourth Floor
York, PA 17401

Present Use: Vehicular bridge

Significance: This bridge is one of nine (9) stone masonry arches owned and maintained by York County and one of eleven in use within York County. This type of construction is representative for the time period due to availability of materials. The bridge is situated in a rural, natural setting.

Project Information: An evaluation (1991) advised replacement of the structure. To mitigate the adverse effect, the State Historic Preservation Office stipulated recordation of the structure. Recordation was performed to fulfill this requirement.

Susan Kotek, P.E.
C. S. Davidson, Inc.
Consulting Civil Engineers
38 North Duke Street
York, PA 17401

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF BRIDGE AND SETTING

This bridge carries Blymire Hollow Road (T-578), a Township road located approximately 1.5 miles south of Winterstown and approximately 100' from State Route 2095 (known as Mount Olivet Road). The bridge is a single-span stone masonry deck arch with a clear span of 36' at the springline. The maximum vertical underclearance is 10'. Blymire Creek flows from north to south under the bridge. Overall length of the structure is 86'. The clear deck width between parapets is 14'-8" and the roadway has a bituminous surface.

North Hopewell Township is a rural area in south central York County. Most roads are narrow, winding macadam or stone roadways not following any formal engineering concepts in regards to their horizontal or vertical alignment, and Blymire Hollow Road is typical of roads in this area. The road was described as connecting the areas known as Mt. Pleasant and Keeney's Mill.

HISTORY OF THE STRUCTURE

In 1914, the residents of North Hopewell Township petitioned the Court of Quarter Sessions of the Peace of York County to appoint viewers to view the site to replace a bridge, stating that the condition of the structure was very dilapidated and the expense to repair or replace it was too much for the Township. The court-appointed viewers recommended, and the grand jury agreed, that a new bridge should be constructed at this site by the County of York. In 1915, the North Hopewell Township Supervisors agreed to construct the approaches to the bridge as necessary and divert the stream to be under the new bridge. On May 17, 1915, a contract was awarded to Ness Brothers to construct a stone arch bridge at their low bid of \$900.00. The bridge was ordered to be built according to the plans and specifications on file and under the supervision of Charles A. Williams, bridge engineer. The plans and specifications have not been found and are believed to have been unintentionally destroyed.

Charles A. Williams, engineer, was born in 1873 on the family farm in Gladfelters Station in York County. He designed and constructed many commercial, public and residential buildings in southern York County, as well as numerous bridges located in York and Adams Counties. Williams designed four other single-span stone masonry arches and five reinforced concrete arches for the County of York, all between 1912 and 1919. Other bridges he designed were for the State of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Williams was a partner in the firm of G.A. & F.M. Wagman from 1919 until 1929. Following retirement, Williams designed and constructed several private homes and represented Farm Bureau Insurance Company. He was also the Springfield Township Justice of the Peace and an active member of Salem Lutheran Church in Jacobus, where he was buried in 1950. This is the only County-owned bridge constructed by Ness Brothers.

From 1956-1958, the York County Bridge Crew performed maintenance on the structure, consisting of cleaning and pointing the stone and repairing the guiderail. In 1983, concrete scour protection was constructed at each abutment and the arch soffit was surfaced with gunite, all by a contractor. Steel tie rods are believed to have been placed around the same time to hold together the eastern walls.

Since its construction, the bridge has been open to all vehicular traffic. Since 1991, the bridge has been posted for a 5 Ton weight restriction, limiting its use to smaller vehicles.

The bridge is significant due to its unique structure type. There are a total of eleven (11) locally-owned stone masonry deck arches located in York County with spans from 20' to 40' built between 1900 and 1920; nine of which are owned and maintained by the County of York.

Comparing recent photographs to photographs taken in 1926 and 1956 reveals that the stream channel has shifted from being nearly centered to flowing against the western abutment. The surrounding area appears similar except that brush and trees have grown up along the banks.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Engineering Drawings

C. S. Davidson, Inc., 1991, measured drawings, National Bridge Inspection Standards, York County Bridge Inspection Program.

C. S. Davidson, Inc., 1978, measured drawings prepared by M. Hegarty, Bridge Inspection Program.

B. Historic Views

Photograph, January 13, 1926, located in York County Archives, Bridge Book No. 2.

Photograph, c.1956, located in York County Archives.

C. Bibliography

York County Archives, York County Road Docket, August 3, 1914.

York County Archives, York County Road Docket, August 28, 1914.

York County Archives, York County Board of Commissioners meeting minutes, April 19, 1915 and May 17, 1915.

York County Archives, York County Road Docket, 1915.

Historical Society of York, Collection No. 30075.